

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/912,931

Applicant(s)

THIBADEAU, ROBERT H.

Examiner

Pramila Parthasarathy

Art Unit

2136

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 10/14/2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 123, 125, 126, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 137, 141, 144, 145; Renumbered as 1-14.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date 12/08/2005.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

CEL
Primary Examiner
10/24/31
12/11/05

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. Applicant's appeal brief arguments filed 10/14/2005, interview held on 12/08/2005 and applicant's amendment to Claims 123, 132 and 141, have been fully considered and the rejections on claims 123, 125, 126, 129, 130 – 135, 137, 141, 144 and 145 have been withdrawn. Applicant cancels claims 1 – 122, 124, 127, 128, 136, 142 and 143.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 123, 125, 126, 129, 130 – 135, 137, 141, 144 and 145 are allowed.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The Admitted prior art [Diamant et al. U.S. Patent 6,268,789, hereinafter "Diamant"] discloses a device for securing access to and from a computer station which includes a first communication interface for connecting to a storage unit, a second input-output (I/O) is interface for connecting to the computer system, a managing controller connected between the first network and the computer system via the first and second communication interfaces, the managing controller also being connected between the storage unit and the computer system via the first and second I/O interfaces. The managing controller provides the computer system with a selection between at least two modes. In a first

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mode, the managing controller connects the computer system to the first storage area and to the first network and in a second mode, the managing controller connects the computer system to the second storage area. The managing controller detects any reset signal followed by a command to operate according to a selected mode, which may be provided either by a user, operating the computer system or by a software application.

However, the admitted prior arts taken independently or in combination, do not disclose, teach or suggest "A storage device for promoting security in a computer system, the storage device comprising: a storage medium for storing data; firmware for reading data from and writing data to the storage medium; and a partition defined on the storage medium for dividing the storage medium into a data partition and a secure data partition, the secure data partition for storing secure data and one or more authority records, wherein the one or more authority records define access permissions relating to the secure data partition and the secure data; wherein the secure data partition contains a master authority record, wherein the one or more authority records can be created and deleted as required by a user having access permissions according to the master authority record; and wherein only the firmware is permitted to access the secure data and the one or more authority records.

3. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in telephone interview with David Brush, registration number 34,557 on December 08, 2005.

IN THE CLAIMS:

1 – 122. (Cancelled)

123. (Amended) A storage device for promoting security in a computer system, the storage device comprising:

a storage medium for storing data;

firmware for reading data from and writing data to the storage medium; and

a partition defined on the storage medium for dividing the storage medium into a data partition and a secure data partition, the secure data partition for storing secure data and one or more authority records, wherein the one or more authority records define access permissions relating to the secure data partition and the secure data;

wherein the secure data partition contains a master authority record, wherein the one or more authority records can be created and deleted as required by a user having access permissions according to the master authority record; and

wherein only the firmware is permitted to access the secure data and the one or more authority records.

124. (Cancelled)

127 – 128. (Cancelled)

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132. (Amended) A method for promoting security in a computer system having an operating system in operative connection with a storage device, wherein said storage device includes a processor and firmware for processing data stored on the storage device, the method comprising:

partitioning a storage medium of the storage device into a data partition and a secure data partition, the data partition being accessible to a user and the secure data partition being invisible to the user, the secure data partition for storing secure data and one or more authority records, wherein the secure data is encrypted and a cryptographic code is embedded in the firmware; and

restricting access to the secure data partition such that only the firmware may access the secure data and the one or more authority records; and

authenticating the cryptographic code with a root assurance in the storage device.

138 – 140. (Cancelled)

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141. (Amended) A storage device comprising: a storage medium having a security partition containing one or more authority records and at least one data set associated with each of the one or more authority records; and

a mechanism within the storage device adapted to limit access to the security partition based on the one or more authority records, wherein the mechanism comprises a processor disposed within the storage device adapted to limit access to the security partition by an operating system of a computer system, and firmware disposed within the storage device adapted to limit access to the security partition by an operating system of a computer system.

142 – 143. (Cancelled)

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Pramila Parthasarathy whose telephone number is 571-272-3866. The examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday – Thursday 8:00a.m. To 3:00p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ayaz Sheikh can be reached on 571-232-3795. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Pramila Parthasarathy
December 08, 2005.

CEL
Pramila Parthasarathy
AU2131
12/11/05